

## Carl Rogers and the IHM Nuns: Sensitivity Training, Psychological Warfare and the “Catholic Problem”

*By E. Michael Jones, Ph.D.*



The Immaculate Heart College silkscreen room in 1956.

During the summer of 1966, at the end of the Second Vatican Council and the beginning of the sexual revolution, the world seemed alive to new sexual possibilities, especially for Catholic nuns and priests, many of whom confidently expected that the Catholic Church's discipline on celibacy was about to be lifted. Joining them in a

chorus of mute anticipation were the Catholic laity, who were just as confident in their expectation that the ban on artificial birth control would be lifted soon as well. Pope Paul VI had appointed a layman-staffed advisory board and it was assumed “correctly, it turns out” that they would vote to overturn the Church's long-standing ban on contraception, a ban which

had been reaffirmed as recently as 30 years before in Pius XI's encyclical *Casti Connubii* (On Christian Marriage).

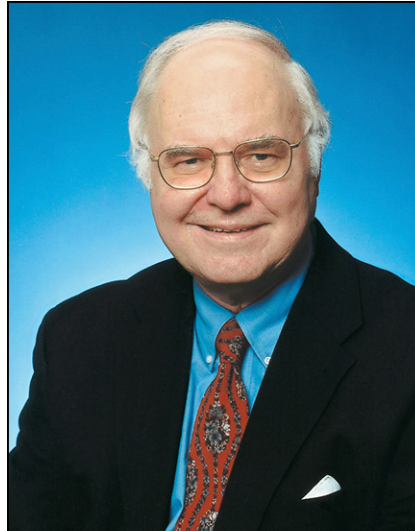
Because of Pope John XXIII, President John F. Kennedy, and the Vatican Council, Catholics had become the focus of so much media attention, they failed to see distortions in the mirror which the media,

# Culture Wars

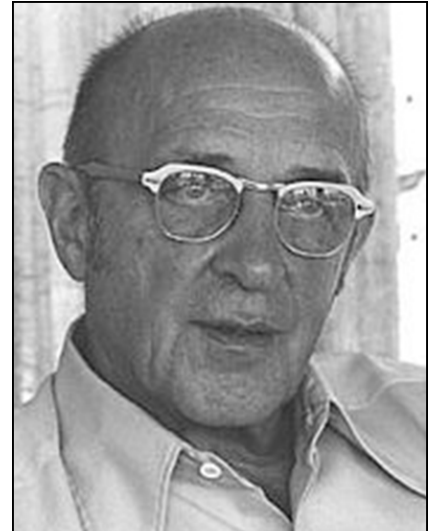
October 1999



Xavier Rhyne



Michael Novak



Carl Rogers

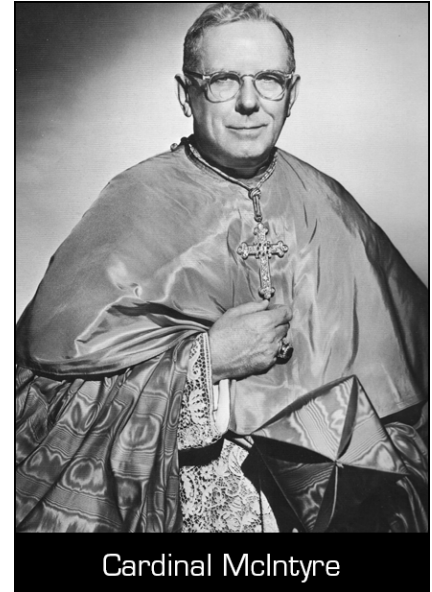
dominated by alumni of the OSS and other psychological warfare operations, held up to their collective face. They failed to understand how seriously malformed their opinions were becoming at the hands of people like Xavier Rhyne and Michael Novak and other media enthusiasts who felt to a man that the long reign of anti-Catholic bigotry in the United States had come to an end and that all the Church needed to do to create its own happy ending was join hands with the liberal Zeitgeist, as reported in places like *Time* and the *New Yorker*, drop a few medieval sexual prohibitions, and walk off into the sunset.

In keeping with the spirit of that age, at some time during the summer of 1966, the Immaculate Heart nuns

of Los Angeles, California invited a New York psychiatrist to their retreat house in Montecito to conduct what had come to be called an encounter workshop, a session of truth-telling and ice-breaking group exercises that broke down social inhibition, fostered an illusory sense of intimacy, and opened the way for the engineering of consent through small group peer pressure. The nuns liked encounter groups so much that a year later a psychologist by the name of Carl Rogers and his associates began something they called the Education Innovation Project with the entire order and all of the schools it ran for the archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Rogers had become famous in 1961 with the publication of his book *On Becoming a Person*. He

along with Abraham Maslow, whose book *Toward a Psychology of Being* came out one year later in 1962, had become the two leading proponents of what came to be known as humanistic or third force psychology. The third force referred to a therapy that was based on both Freud and Watson but was more “client centered.” In Rogerian therapy, the client solved his own problems, with minimal interference from his therapist guide, who gave little more than non-committal answers as a way of guiding the patient to truths that the client knew but chose not to see. Another name for this therapy was nondirective counseling. A creation of the early 1940s, it had been proposed, according to the formulation of Rogers’ assistant W. R. Coulson,



“as a humane replacement for behaviourism in the laboratory and Freudian psychoanalysis in the clinic.”

In 1965, Carl Rogers began circulating a paper entitled “The Process of the Basic Encounter Group” to some religious orders in the Los Angeles area. One group which found his ideas intriguing was the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This should not be surprising because the California-based IHM nuns had already established the reputation of being “innovative.” In the early ‘60s, Sister Aloyse, the order’s superior, had brought in the Dutch psychologist-priest Adrian van Kaam for retreat exercises during which “all community rules were suspended” (Weber, p. 419). The results of this sort of innovation were predictable.

After allowing the psychologists in, the nuns became aware of “how dictatorial superiors were and in turn how dependent, submissive and helpless nuns were when it came to working with the outside world” (Weber, p. 419).

By the spring of 1965, James Francis Cardinal McIntyre, archbishop of the archdiocese of Los Angeles, had become upset at the large number of Immaculate Heart nuns who had asked to be dispensed from their vows. Large, as time would show, was a relative term in this respect. Soon the number of nuns asking to be laicized would turn into a flood, and the sensitivity training which Carl Rogers would unleash on the order under the auspices of the Education Innovation Project would play a

major role in their leaving. By the time the experiment was over, the order would cease to exist, leaving subsequent generations to puzzle over an incident which had become a classic instance of renewal gone-wrong in the aftermath of Vatican II.

With the benefit of hindsight, anyone who read Rogers’ paper should have been aware of this possibility from the beginning. In a version of that paper which appeared in the July 1969 issue of *Psychology Today*, entitled *Community: The Group Comes of Age*, Rogers explained that:

“In mixed intensive workshops positive and warm, loving feelings frequently develop between members of the encounter group and, naturally enough, these feelings sometimes occur between men and



# Culture Wars

October 1999

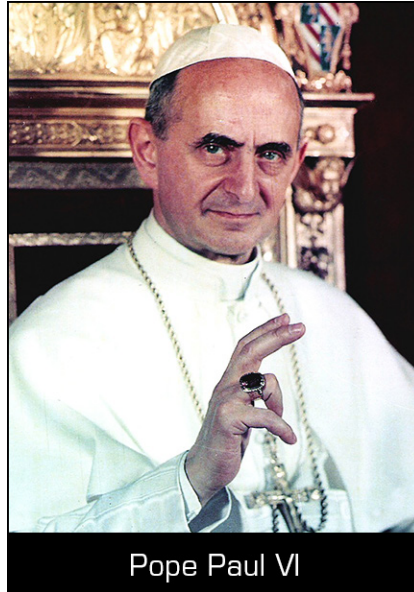
women. Inevitably, some of these feelings have a sexual component and this can be a matter of great concern to the participants and ... a profound threat to their spouses.”

Or to their religious vows, Rogers might have added.

Right around the time that Rogers was circulating *Involvement in the Basic Encounter*, a draft of a paper published two years later as *The Process of the Basic Encounter Group* among the Immaculate Heart nuns in 1965, the Vatican Council came to a close. A close reading of the pertinent documents would show they reaffirmed Catholic tradition. But at that time close readings had been eschewed in favor of readings in keeping with the “spirit” of Vatican II, which seemed eager to second whatever the secular Zeitgeist was proposing at the time.

On September 2, 1966, Pope Paul VI implemented the earlier conciliar decree on religious life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, by issuing a Motu Proprio in which he urged all religious “to examine and renew their way of life and towards that end to engage in wide-ranging experimentation.” The pope added the following caveat:

“provided that the purpose, nature and character of the institute are safeguarded.” In keeping with the spirit of the times, the caveat was all but



universally ignored. In fact, those most eager to experiment were those also most likely to ignore it. The IHM sisters were among the first to respond, and, within six weeks, the pontiff’s letter had been circulated among the 560 members of the community. A number of commissions were appointed to study carefully all aspects of their religious commitment.

Religious orders like the Immaculate Heart Nuns, already bigger than they had ever been in their history of their existence, now seemed on the verge of even greater accomplishments as they renewed themselves by getting rid of outmoded forms of dress and behavior. Now the same baby boom which their schools had educated was providing



vocations to staff the order. A generation of demographic increase was beginning to pay off. One member of that generation who had decided to become an Immaculate Heart nun was Jeanne Cordova. Cordova graduated from high school in the spring of 1966, and on a sunny September 6, 1966 she and four of her nine brothers and sisters drove up to the novitiate in Santa Barbara where she was to begin her life as a nun.

On January 1, 1967, Jeanne Cordova was called into the mother’s superior’s office and told that she and her fellow novices were being sent to live in the “real world,” which, in this instance, meant a building surrounded by chain-link fence and barbed wire in downtown Los Angeles near skid row, where Cordova would lie



The Mary's Day Parade at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, 1964

awake at night, watching the pulsing red light on top of Los Angeles city hall and wonder what had happened to her and the convent she had chosen in lieu of this “real world.” Cordova arrived at the novitiate expecting something different from what she eventually got. Her bitterness at what amounted to bait and switch tactics (even if perpetrated inadvertently) was still palpable 20 years later.

“They promised me monastic robes, glorious Latin liturgy, the protection of the three sacred vows, the peace of saints in a quiet cell, the sisterhood of a holy family. But I entered religious life the year John XXIII [sic] was taking it apart: 1966. The fathers of the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church were sitting

at the Vatican Council destroying in the name of CHANGE, my dreams. Delete Latin ritual. Dump the habit. Damn holy obedience. Send nuns and priests out into the REAL world. If I had wanted the real world, I’d have stayed in it.” (Curb & Manahan, p. 3)

As part of her entry into the real world, Cordova was enrolled at Immaculate Heart College, the flagship school of the order, where she was subjected to Rogers’ Education Innovation Project first hand through sensitivity training and second hand through the teachers who had also taken the sensitivity training. Perhaps no one epitomized the new nun better than “famous people like Sister Corita [Kent]” an artist nun who was famous for her

graffiti-inspired paintings which illustrated passages from the Bible, like the Beatitudes in updated language, e.g., Happy the poor in spirit, instead of the more traditional term “Blessed.” Cordova remembers one art course in which she and other nuns were required to run across the tops of desks while dabbing paint onto canvases. She remembers being told that in doing this she and the other nuns were “expressing ourselves.” She also remembers taking a course with Sister Richard, “a great brain in philosophy,” who “tied the sacrament of baptism in with the order of the cosmos.”

Similarly, nothing epitomized the new spirituality better than sensitivity training. One of Sister Richard’s colleagues in the English department

# Culture Wars

October 1999

wrote that, as a result of the sensitivity training she had received as part of the Education Innovation Project, she had redesigned all of her courses. "My classroom behavior," she wrote, "is radically different now. I have been able to confess anxiety to my classes and consequently feel more comfortable in the classroom than ever before. I invited the girls to call me by my first name, and after a couple of weeks they are doing so. This allows for a lot of free exchange. I am not giving grades and I am not even giving exams. They are writing their own questions, the ones that are meaningful to them. Then they are discussing them."

In their enthusiasm for Rogers' encounter groups, the older sisters seem to have missed the fact that students like Jeanne Cordova found the whole experience more bewildering than exhilarating. "A lot of times," wrote one of Cordova's fellow students, "I've heard that faculty felt they were being forced ... to say things they didn't want to say; I myself feel very uncomfortable about being shut in with people who break down and say things I feel I shouldn't have heard. I think it creates a kind of embarrassment, which would seem to be a hindrance in relationships rather than a help. Still, I do feel that I've gained a lot of insight into other



Corita Kent

peoples' behavior." Another student was even more troubled. "I felt at a loss today in that encounter group: very naked, as though everyone knows too much about me."

Before long, many of the nuns started to feel naked as well, mainly because, as a result of the loosening of controls in the order in the name of California-style openness, they were taking off their clothes and having sex with other nuns. Instead of doing a close reading of Rogers' paper on groups, especially the passage about how encounter groups often led to "feelings which have a sexual component" and acting according to procedures consonant with the vow of chastity, the Immaculate Heart nuns, in the name of openness and innovation, decided that they had to

learn the same lesson about human passion in the expensive school of experience. In the name of openness, religious asceticism vanished from convent life. Cordova stopped going to Mass at 6:30 in the morning because nuns weren't "required" to go to Mass anymore. As religious practice evaporated from their lives, the nuns turned to each other for support. Particular friendships flourished, and, in the atmosphere of the times, some of these friendships inevitably turned sexual. This, of course, meant that life in the convent became both mean-spirited and chaotic:

"The spring of 1967 I watched Michelle and Sally and the other nuns. I saw lots of not going to Mass, lots of particular friendships, a whole sub-culture of in-group and out-group, who they were and how they did it and how you could just lie your way out of anything. To a lonely postulant in a miserable friendless world, it was an absurd outrage. I fell out of love with Jesus and the IHMs, who betrayed and mocked my innocence ... I was sinking in the quagmire of broken dreams .... All I have ever wanted to be was a nun. Now I was, and it was hell." (Curb and Manahan, p. 13).

Jeanne Cordova found that she couldn't talk to her parents about the changes, probably because her



parents were as bewildered by the unprecedented sequence of events as she was. "Mom was a sheltered, upper class, convent-raised Irish Catholic from Queens, Long Island, who probably first read about birth control in the LA Times between her ninth and tenth kid." In the bewildering atmosphere of the updated chaotic convent, where the IHM nuns were told to be open to their feelings in the encounter groups they were attending, Cordova found solace in sexual contact with one of the other nuns. Both embittered and sexualized by her experience in the convent, Cordova converted to lesbian activism with the same fervor which she offered to the pre-conciliar Church.

I harnessed my anger into love for gays as an oppressed people. My bitterness demands the straight world to move over and accept our rights. I have learned that my anger takes me where others are afraid to go and that outrage is good in the eyes of whatever Higher Power gives us righteous, if misguided, anger to protect us (p. 14).

Other IHM nuns had similar experiences. Sister Mary Benjamin, like Jean Cordova, was driven to the IHM novitiate by her large Catholic family, who piled out of the station wagon "like a baseball team" when they arrived there in 1962. Like Jean



Cordova, Sister Mary Benjamin was enrolled as a student at Immaculate Heart College, where, four years later, during the summer of 1966, she was "introduced to sensitivity training, the order's first venture into the human potential movement" (Curb & Manahan, p. 183). In her encounter group, Sister Mary met Eva, "a heavy, dark-skinned woman with deep brown eyes and black hair."

Given the spirit of the times, the alchemy of this relationship was just as predictable as that which seduced Jean Cordova:

"The order no longer prohibited particular friendships," Sister Mary recounted matter of factly, "so the contact turned sexual." Sister Mary sought council from a priest, but apparently he had been infected by the

spirit of the times as well and "refused to pass judgment on my actions. He said it was up to me to decide if they were right or wrong. He opened a door, and I walked through, realizing I was on my own." When Sister Mary told Eva that she was "worried that I had a terrible crush on her," Eva responded by saying, "Great! Enjoy it!"

Sister Mary's relationship with Eva turned out to be less than enjoyable, however. After the friendship became sexualized, a painful breakup ensued, which in turn precipitated a break with the Catholic Church. Sister Mary, like most lesbians, was then cast adrift on a sea of transient relationships, the sort that Carl Rogers would praise in his speech at Sonoma State College in 1969. One relationship which proved especially transient was her relationship with the Catholic Church. "In loving Eva," she wrote, "I was growing in a direction at odds with convent goals of obedience and service to the Church. I began to make decisions, not out of guilt, but according to the voice of my intuition and the wisdom of my body. I began to see the Church more objectively. It was run by men, not God. My allegiance to the Church was no longer fate but choice." Actually, if Sister Mary had been reading Wilhelm Reich, she would have realized that once she started acting on

her illicit sexual impulses her break with the Church was more fate than choice. Once she began acting out her lesbian impulses, her break with the Church was inevitable.

Because she was subsequently dragooned into feminism, Sister Mary simply lacked the intellectual categories to understand what had happened to her. Everything was now a question of “liberation” from oppression, and since the formerly Protestant culture she embraced had hundreds of years of experience in portraying convent life as a form of oppression, it is not surprising that she would see matters that way too. If there were sinister forces at work in precipitating Sister Mary’s departure from the convent and the Catholic faith, the lesbianism which replaced her Catholicism as the religious center of her life precluded any clear understanding of them. The categories of lesbian politics took control of her mind and precluded any other explanation of what had happened to her.

Like Jeanne Cordova, Jean O’Leary entered the convent in 1966. Like Jean Cordova, she was immediately plunged into the regimen of the “renewed” religious order, which meant “we were together constantly, talking endlessly and intensely in sensitivity and encounter groups



about love and hope and philosophy.” As with the two previous examples, all this “intensely emotional talk” about “great thinkers and modern psychology” inevitably led to sexual feelings, which inevitably led to sexual activity, which inevitably led to a religious crisis when it became apparent that the nuns were acting in ways which were incompatible with the vows they had taken. At this point, the nuns had to make a choice, either to conform their lives to their principles or their principles to their lives. For those who persisted in their sexual activity, the result was a foregone conclusion.

As Wilhelm Reich had predicted in *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, illicit sexual activity has loss of faith as one of its inevitable sequelae. Like



Sister Mary, Jean O’Leary turned to a priest for guidance, but as in the previous instance, the priest was himself a psychologist who had been brought into the order to facilitate the very encounter groups which were the catalyst for the sexual activity which was causing the problem.

Unsurprisingly, no spiritual help was forthcoming from this corner, and Jean O’Leary began another affair, this time with the novice mistress, before eventually drifting out of the religious community she had joined and into political lesbianism as its surrogate.

At around the same time that Jean O’Leary was acting out her sexual impulses, Abe Maslow, one of the creators of the psychology which enabled her and other nuns



to act on their newly-discovered sexual impulses, was having second thoughts about the whole encounter group phenomenon. "I've been in continuous conflict," he wrote in his diary, "for a long time over this, over Esalen-type, orgiastic, Dionysian-type education." Maslow had not always had conflicts of this sort. Writing in *The Journal of Psychology* in 1949, Maslow said confidently that "I can report empirically the healthiest persons in our culture ... are most (not least) pagan, most (not least) instinctive, most (not least) accepting of their animal nature."

Three years before Carl Rogers' paper on encounter groups circulated among the nuns in Los Angeles, on April 17, 1962, Abraham Maslow gave a lecture to a group of nuns at Sacred Heart, a Catholic women's college in Massachusetts. Maslow noted in a diary entry of the same date that the talk had been very "successful," but he found that very fact troubling. "They shouldn't applaud me," he wrote, "they should attack. If they were fully aware of what I was doing, they would [attack]" (Journals, p. 157).

Just why the nuns should have attacked him becomes evident from a reading of other journal entries written around the same time. Maslow was aware that encounter groups were toxic for Catholics in general



and especially toxic for Catholic religious. Anyone who promoted encounter groups among Catholics was promoting ipso facto their demise as Catholics, even if he did so in the name of liberation and with that as his intent. For the liberal Jew or Protestant, the nun was the textbook case of someone in need of "liberation," and in the context of Catholic religious life and the vows upon which it was based, liberation could only mean annihilation.

On February 25, 1967, Maslow wrote in his diary that "Maybe morons need rules, dogmas, ceremonies, etc." He then made a note to order a book entitled *Life Among the Lowbrows* for the Brandeis library. He may have ordered it because the author of that book noted in it that

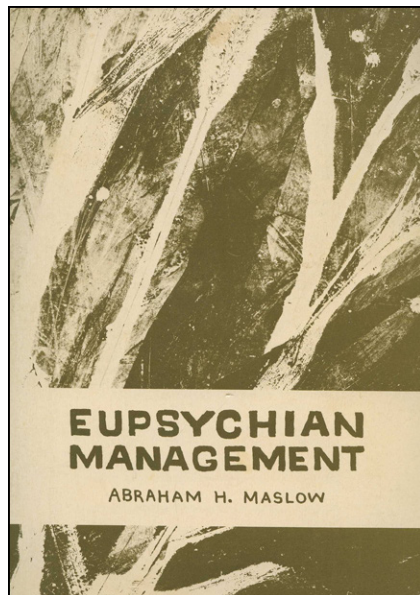
"feeble-minded clients behaved much better and felt better being Catholic and following all the rules." Since the nuns weren't feeble-minded, this meant that bringing "self-actualization" to the nuns meant destroying their commitment to their vows and the Catholic Church. Perhaps this is why Maslow felt they shouldn't have applauded his talk in 1962. Maslow, who had spent time at the National Training Laboratories' headquarters in Bethel, Maine, where encounter groups, with the help of subsidies from the Office of Naval Research, had been created, knew that they were funded as a form of psychological warfare and he had an inkling of the effect they would have on nuns, but it was up to his colleague Carl Rogers to do the actual experiment.

"I guess what I'm trying to say here," Maslow wrote in his journal in 1965, the same year that Carl Rogers began circulating his paper on the psychology of small group encounter among the IHM nuns and around the same time that the nuns started to leave the convent,

"... is that these interpersonal therapeutic growth-fostering relationships of all kinds which rest on intimacy, on honesty, on self-disclosure, on becoming sensitively aware of one's self and thereby of responsibility for feeding back one's impression of

others, etc. that these are profoundly revolutionary devices, in the strict sense of the word that is, of shifting the whole direction of a society in a more preferred direction. As a matter of fact, it might be revolutionary in another sense if something like this were done very widely. I think the whole culture would change within a decade and everything in it." (Journals, pp. 166-68, my emphasis).

What was true for the culture at large was a fortiori true of religious orders in the Catholic Church. The whole culture did change, as a matter of fact, after implementation of encounter groups became widespread, but nowhere was the change as dramatic as in the Catholic Church, where it literally destroyed the orders which tried to experiment with it. After making contact with their inner selves, the nuns all wanted to leave their orders and have sex, although not always in that order. "A sign of this potency," Rogers' assistant W. R. Coulson wrote some 30 years later, "was the conversions that followed Rogers' workshops. A Catholic priest took part in a five-day workshop in the 1960s, then left the priesthood to study psychology with Rogers, who had been his group facilitator. It happened repeatedly. Of the workshop that converted him, the priest wrote that he began somewhat skeptically,



but "By Wednesday ... something new and intriguing and intoxicating as well a frightening has become real all around me .... [It] seemed like a beautiful birth to a new existence .... I had not known how unaware I was of my deepest feelings nor how valuable they might be to other people .... Never in my life before that group experience had I experienced "me" so intensely" (p. 75).

The priest may not have noticed it, but both Maslow and Rogers were involved in the sexual engineering of behavior. Catholic religious who were expected to lead ascetic lives while at the same time being told that love was the reason for their asceticism, were now experiencing the "love" they had always talked about in previously abstract and rarefied

terms, and they were for the most part unhinged by the experience. The effectiveness of the encounter group was based on the deliberate violation of the sexual inhibitions which made everyday life possible. When the inhibitions dropped, the emotion which flooded in to fill the vacuum seemed a lot like the love which Christians were supposed to practice on their neighbors, when in point of fact it was more akin to unfettered libido, which could now be used by the facilitator as the energy which brought about the social engineering they desired.

Maslow was never shy in proposing sexual activity as a form of social engineering. In a passage which appeared in his book *Eupsychian Management* (but was subsequently deleted by the editors who reissued it in 1998 as *Maslow on Management*), Maslow said that "it always struck me as a very wise kind of thing that the lower-class Negroes did, as reported in one study, in Cleveland, Ohio. Among those Negroes the sexual life began at puberty. It was the custom for an older brother to get a friend in his own age grade to break in his little sister sexually when she came of a suitable age. And the same thing was done on the girl's side. A girl who had a younger brother coming into puberty would seek among her own

girl friends for one who would take on the job of initiating the young boy into sex in a nice way. This seems extremely sensible and wise and could also serve highly therapeutic purposes in various other ways as well. I remember talking with Alfred Adler about this in a kind of joking way, but then we both got quite serious about it, and Adler thought that his sexual therapy at various ages was certainly a very fine thing. As we both played with the thought we envisaged a kind of social worker in both sexes, who was very well trained for this sort of thing, sexually but primarily as a psychotherapist in giving therapy literally on the couch, that is for mixing in the beautiful and gentle sexual initiation with all the goals of psychotherapy.”

Maslow’s use of the Negro as a paradigm of sexual liberation was part of a long tradition which surfaced in the 1920s with the Harlem Renaissance and reached its culmination in the civil rights movement of the ‘60s, which was to become the prime vehicle for the overthrow of sexual norms in America. So is his idea of the psychotherapist “giving therapy literally on the couch.” Both would be tactics waged against the Catholics in the Kulturkampf of the ‘60s as a way of changing their outmoded attitudes and moving them



Ellwood Kieser

in a direction more congenial to the progressive facilitators.

By the late ‘60s, which is to say, shortly before his death, Maslow was confronted not with the theory of encounter groups and third force humanistic psychology, but with its ever increasing and more widespread practice, and what he saw appalled him. The reverence for learning which he associated with Jews had all but dried up at Brandeis, where he was teaching and could measure the effect of his theories on students first hand:

“One trouble with liberals, humanists, psychology 3 [humanistic psychology], McGregor, Esalen, Rogers, et al. is in their giving up of evil, or at least their total confusion about it. As if there were no sons of

bitches or paranoids or psychopaths or true believers in the world to crap things up, even in a Utopian environment. My class has lost the traditional Jewish respect for knowledge, learning and teachers ...” (p. 951) “...I don’t want it.” (Journals, p. 1089)

By 1967, Maslow was referring to the self-actualization which encounter groups were supposed to bring about as “S. A. stuff,” which had become, in turn, just part of the “Esalen-Dionysian” enterprise. One year before his death, he could now detect in all of these activities the odor of “insanity and death” (May 17, 1969 journal entry).

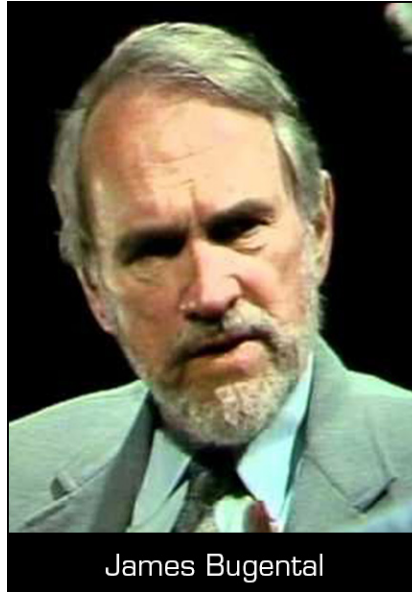
The misgivings expressed by the creators of humanistic psychology were not shared by their more enthusiastic epigoni, who were more bent on “giving therapy literally on the couch,” especially among the nuns, than in expressing the misgivings about the consequences for higher things which flowed from this sort of behavior. In *Hollywood Priest*, his memoir of his years as a TV producer and Paulist Priest, Rev. Ellwood “Bud” Kieser describes meeting a nun he identifies only as “Genevieve” at the IHM retreat house in Santa Barbara in 1964. (Kieser’s story has uncanny similarities with the story of James F. T. Bugental, one of Rogers’ followers who had a practice in Los Angeles



and ended up marrying former IHM nun Elizabeth Keber.)

During the fall of 1965, Kieser was in Rome covering the end of the Vatican Council. When he returned at the end of the year, he realized that he had fallen deeply in love with Sister "Genevieve," who announced when they met again at the retreat house that she was going to begin psychotherapy. Kieser was taken aback by the announcement, but claims that he "admired her courage in facing the situation and trying to do something about it." Kieser never gets around to explaining just what "the situation" was or why it required treatment in 1966, but a large part of the reason was the encounter groups the nuns were involved in. According to the tenets of encounter psychology, you had to be crazy to repress your libido. Since all nuns repressed their libidos, they were all ipso facto crazy and, therefore, candidates for therapy, although only the bravest of them had the guts to descend into their unconscious to prove the point.

Not surprisingly, Genevieve found therapy painful. As a result, she turned to Father Kieser for guidance, wondering if she should continue because she was not sure she could trust her therapist. Kieser, who had read a book the therapist had written, assured her that she



could trust Harry, the pseudonym Kieser applied to the therapist. It was advice that Kieser would live to regret. To begin with, the prime result of Genevieve's therapy was convincing her that her decision to enter the convent had been based on "repression rather than the sublimation of her sexual drives." And now, in the midst of the sexual revolution of the '60s, when Genevieve was in her late thirties, "those mechanisms of repression seemed to be coming apart" (p. 160). Just why those mechanisms were coming apart becomes apparent when Kieser describes the type of therapy to which Sister Genevieve was being subjected:

"Very early in her therapy, her therapist 'let's call him Harry' had suggested a degree of sex play to help

her with her repressions. Almost all therapists would today consider this a serious breach of professional ethics. But in the 1960s such procedures were not uncommon. She went along. When she told me, I was furious. She decided to stop. But she was vulnerable. So was he. Once started this kind of thing is difficult to keep in check. It became a problem that plagued her therapy.

By the summer of 1967, the problem became so serious that Harry arranged another therapist for "Genevieve." But by the fall, they started seeing each other outside therapy, and the sexual relationship only intensified, something which "Genevieve" shared with Father Kieser, who was now consumed with both "pure masculine jealousy" and justifiable indignation at a flagrant abuse of the doctor-patient relationship."

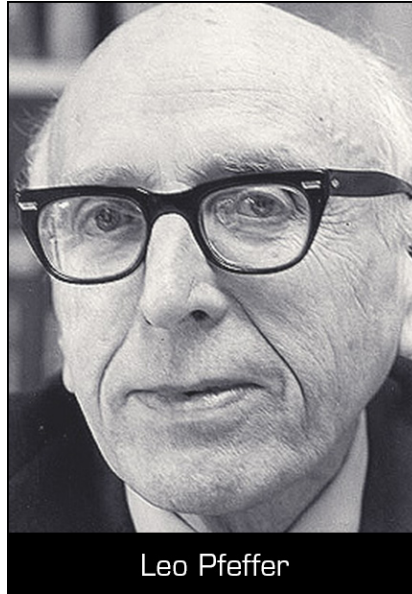
Harry the Therapist was, of course, married to another woman at the time, a woman whom he would eventually abandon to marry Sister Genevieve. Father Kieser, for his part however, has a difficult time deciding whether his feelings are motivated by moral outrage or by simple jealousy. He is so upset that he contemplates killing Harry the Therapist, but for all that, he never really understands what is happening, even though he mentions the fact that the sexual

revolution of the '60s might have something to do with it:

"We were both caught up in the cultural revolution that characterized American society and the Catholic Church during the 1960s. The consensus that characterized both society and Church was beginning to come undone. On every side authority, creed, and institutions were being challenged. Dogmas were suspect, certainties rejoiced, absolutes called into question, values rigorously scrutinized, and rules routinely broken. The sexual revolution was in full swing, and its initial message seemed to be: If it feels good, go with it." (Kieser, p. 160).

Kieser was not only caught up in the cultural revolution of the 1960s, he was witnessing the engine which drove it first hand, and yet remained blind to what was right in front of his eyes. Wilhelm Reich could have explained it to him. Adultery and religious vows don't mix. People involved in both have to choose eventually one or the other. Since sex of this sort is highly addictive, the choice often goes against the vows religious made to serve the Church. Sex was the best way of "liberating" nuns from the their convents.

As Leo Pfeffer would say in 1976, the cultural revolution of the '60s was a battle between the Enlightenment



Leo Pfeffer

(as espoused by liberal Protestants and Jews) and the Catholic Church. Sex was simply the most effective weapon the Enlightenment would bring to bear in this battle. Reich had explicated the use of sex as a way of destroying religious faith, especially among the clergy, in his magnum opus of sexual politics, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, which was undergoing a revival around the same time that Kieser was puzzling over Sister Genevieve's behavior. But Kieser hadn't read Reich, and even if he had he was probably incapable of understanding it. The reason is simple enough. Kieser has so adopted the psychological categories of his oppressors, he couldn't understand what was happening right in front of his eyes to Sister Genevieve and

her order. Because of his closeness to Sister Genevieve, Kieser in fact became the chief enabler of her demise as a nun, something which he perceived dimly "I felt somehow responsible. If I had decided differently, would she be deciding differently?" but only after it was too late.

Kieser tries valiantly to understand what is going on, but fails each time, thwarted by the categories the culture has given him. Who can argue with liberation after all? Even if it means the repudiation of vows. In each instance, Kieser's attempt to understand what is happening to his nun friend is thwarted by the categories of the plumbing psychology which allowed him to get her in trouble in the first place. "Were her faith difficulties connected to her sexual ones?" Kieser wonders, making a wild stab and hitting the bullseye at the same time. But even when he comes up with correct answer, he can't pursue it because of the psychological categories he has imbibed from California culture. "I do not know, but I know that when you repress any one facet of you humanity, you do violence to every other facet. Sexual repression not only inhibits your ability to relate to someone of the opposite sex. It also inhibits your ability to relate to God" (p. 161). So in order to remedy

her inability to relate to God, should Sister Genevieve engage in sexual activity with her therapist because that breaks down repression? Kieser seems incapable of doing anything other than pouring more gasoline on the fire.

In order to get a better grip on what is going on, Father Kieser decided to attend “one of the marathon therapy sessions then in vogue” which Sister Genevieve had been attending. The encounter lasted 22 hours, but by the end of it, Kieser still can’t understand the connection between Encounter Groups and Sister Genevieve’s loss of faith and subsequent sexual bondage. In fact, not only did Kieser not see the Encounter as part of the problem, he came away from it “exhilarated.”

Kieser had been sucked in himself into the mechanism that was destroying the IHM order and he wasn’t even aware of what happened to him. “Her therapy continued to be painful,” continued the ever-clueless Father Kieser. “Sometimes it seemed that she was caught in a whirlpool that was sucking her down and down into extinction” (Kieser, p. 162).

At Thanksgiving of 1967, Genevieve informed Father Kieser that Harry the Therapist had left his wife and was filing for divorce. Sister Genevieve was now living with her therapist until the divorce became

final, whereupon they planned to marry. One more IHM nun was headed out the door, and encounter group therapy was what enabled her to leave. Kieser described himself as shattered by the revelation “because this marked her definitive breach with the Church and seemingly with those values “love, fidelity, self-sacrifice, respect for the rights of others, honesty “that the church had nurtured in us, and which I had always thought we had in common.” Genevieve didn’t seem too happy either, admitting to Kieser that “she would feel guilt for what she was doing to his wife for the rest of her life” (Kieser, p. 169).

The flagship of the Immaculate Heart order, Immaculate Heart College, was located right in the middle of the therapy and psychology which would find in California the best exemplar of the lifestyle it promoted. Los Angeles was, more or less, halfway between Esalen in Big Sur just South of San Francisco to the north, and it was just north of La Jolla, where Carl Rogers was located at the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute. It was also in the immediate vicinity of a number of therapists, some of whom were associates of Rogers, who would play a major role in the Education Innovation Project. According to W. R. Coulson, Rogers’

assistant in the EIP, “the Team from WBSI was on the Immaculate Heart campus to teach and exemplify what would soon begin to be called their “quiet revolution” in education.” According to Coulson, “WBSI wasn’t the only alien presence. Other consultants arrived, having heard that the nuns were ripe for psychological experimentation.”

If the implication of “psychological experimentation” sounds sinister, it should be added that the nuns were eager to become guinea pigs. The nuns had reached the pinnacle of their power as an organization at the same time that Catholics were enjoying the unprecedented political acceptance of which the election of John F. Kennedy to the White House was the most obvious example. The Immaculate Heart order had 560 nuns at an early point in the project and ran a system of 60 schools. Like nuns across the United States, which numbered 186,000 at the time, the Immaculate Heart Order had reached the apogee of its size and influence in the twenty years since the end of World War II.

Since both the Immaculate Heart Nuns and Carl Rogers reached the apogee of their influence at around the same time and around the same place, when both time and place had merged to create the Zeitgeist one



could call California in the “60s, it was inevitable that they would come into contact. Born in 1902, the same year as Paul Blanshard, Rogers, like Blanshard, was drawn early in life to the ministry, but also like Blanshard, he abandoned the ministry “after two years at Union Theological Seminary” in lieu of studies at Columbia University. Unlike Blanshard, Rogers did not study with Dewey directly, but he imbibed his spirit from Dewey’s disciples, one of whom, William H. Kilpatrick, ran his classes on the philosophy of education in ways similar to later Encounter Groups. For both men, science at Columbia University (for Blanshard, sociology; for Rogers, psychology) became the vehicle which would achieve what the liberal Protestant pulpit promised but could not deliver. During the 1930s, Rogers was working as a guidance counselor in Rochester, New York when, almost by accident, he discovered a technique which would help neurotics move forward with their lives, leading them by subtly manipulative questioning to the issues that had stalled them. Rogers called his key insight “the clarifying response.” “The main aim of the counselor,” he wrote in his 1942 book, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: Newer Concepts in Practice*:

“... is to assist the client to drop any



defensiveness, any feeling that attitudes should not be brought into the open, any concerns that the counselor may criticize or suggest or order. If this aim can be accomplished then the client is freed to look at the situation in its reality without having to justify or protect himself. “

In 1965, Rogers wrote that his first involvement with encounter groups was “an intensive post-doctoral workshop in psychotherapy in 1950.” In Carl Rogers on Encounter Groups, he moved the date back to when the encounter group was first conceived in the aftermath of World War II. During the years 1946 and “47, Rogers and his associates at the Counseling Center of the University of Chicago were involved in training counselors for the Veterans Administration, when he was

asked to come up with a psychological training mechanism which would help these counselors reintegrate soldiers, returning from the war into civilian life. Rogers soon discovered that intensive group experiences were more effective in changing behavior than cognitive training.

Rogers goes on to say that the Chicago group did nothing to expand this approach. Even granting that, however, it is clear that other people were pursuing the same ideas at the same time, and that gradually over a period of 20 years, all of these elements came together in the encounter group of the 1960s.

By 1966, when Carl Rogers began experimenting with the Immaculate Heart Nuns and the effect that encounter groups had on them, the encounter group or sensitivity training or the T-group had been in existence for about 20 years and had been modified by those who made use of it. Rogers describes the mix as “Lewinian thinking and Gestalt psychology on the one hand, and client-centered therapy on the other.” Rogers’ “clarifying response” had become one of the standard tools for encounter groups. According to Rogers, Sensitivity Training was: “... relatively unstructured, providing a climate of maximum freedom for personal expression, exploration

# Culture Wars

October 1999



Carl Rogers conducting an encounter group session.

of feelings and interpersonal communication. Emphasis is upon the interactions among the group members, in an atmosphere which encourages each to drop his defenses and his facades and thus enables him to relate directly and openly to other members of the group “the basic encounter.” (Coulson, “Rejoinder,” Measure)

By the 1960s, Rogers was using encounter “therapy” not on neurotics, as in the “30s in Rochester, and not on returning GI’s, whose disorientation to civilian life may have resembled neurosis, but on “normal” people. In fact, in terms of their orientation toward other people and the altruism of their motivation, the IHM nuns were clearly above normal. That being the case, the desire to have

a client “drop his defenses” takes on meaning that at the very least needs clarification or at worst begins to sound slightly sinister, in the same sense that Maslow mentioned its revolutionary capacities in regard to the nuns he met a few years earlier. The value judgments Rogers makes “mask vs. real person, etc.” become more questionable, the more normal his “clients” become. If the criterion in dealing with “clients” is not health, what are we to make of the value judgments scattered throughout the following passage?

“It becomes increasingly evident that what they have first presented are facades, masks. Only cautiously do the real feelings and real persons emerge. The contrast between the outer shell and the inner person

becomes more and more apparent as the hours go by. Little by little, a sense of genuine communication builds up, and the person who has been thoroughly walled off from others comes out with some small segment of his actual feelings.” (Rogers, p. 8).

Were the Immaculate Heart nuns “real persons”? Or were they hiding behind “facades”? How was Carl Rogers supposed to decide, since the nuns were not suffering from mental illness? The only sense in which these questions have therapeutic value is if the person is suffering from some sort of mental disorder. If that is not the case, then the vocabulary all points in the direction of social engineering. Carl Rogers may very well have thought that the nuns were mentally ill simply by the fact that



Carl Rogers leading a panel discussing mental health issues.

they were nuns, but in this instance, therapy has clearly entered the realm of politics (or religion).

Rogers is involved, in this instance, not in trying to heal them, but in trying to change them into something he feels is better than a nun. Even if he decides to change them into “better” nuns, he can only act on that premise in light of what he considers good and bad, politically and not psychologically, since the nuns were not ill, nor was Rogers claiming that they were.

All of the value judgments in Rogers’ description of encounter groups need a context before they can be properly understood. If the client is neurotic, the context is health. If the clients are healthy “which was presumably the case with the IHM

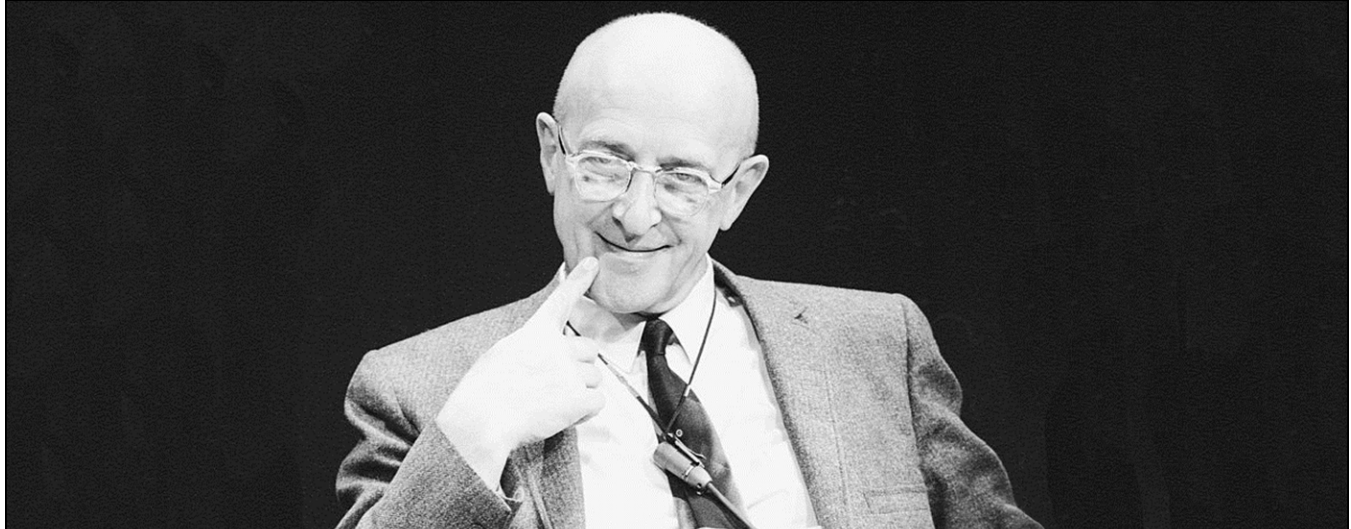
nuns “the context is politics, and what goes by the name of therapy is really social engineering, no matter how “nondirective” the therapist/facilitator claims to be. Rogers’ own testimony makes it clear that he saw encounter groups in precisely this political light, which is another way of saying that he saw them as social engineering and not therapy.

By 1968, which is to say two years into the Education Innovation Project, Rogers and Coulson got the sense that something was wrong. By that point in the program over three hundred nuns had asked to be laicized and the order had been split into two mutually antagonistic groups which were fighting over the order’s financial assets. The progressive faction was

also waging a publicity campaign against Cardinal McIntyre. The only way in which the project could be looked upon as a success was by adopting the public relations jargon that was currently being used to describe the war in Vietnam. Like the U.S. troops over there, Rogers had to destroy the order in order to save it. The only way the Education Innovation Project could be termed a success was if its intent was to destroy the order in the first place.

Eventually, Coulson would go on to apologize publicly for his efforts and become a vocal opponent of the very thing he promoted in the “60s. Instead of apologizing, however, Rogers got defensive. By the time he wrote his book on encounter groups in 1969-70, Rogers would





Carl Rogers listens during a group therapy session, San Diego, California, 1966.

claim his enemies were all right wing nuts. The incongruity of the non-directive Dr. Rogers attacking his political opponents so intemperately gives some indication that there was a political agenda at work in the encounter groups from the very beginning. But if that were the case, it was an agenda that was all but invisible to the untrained eye. In this, Rogers was a typical example of the English ideology, which claimed, like Newton, that it “framed no hypotheses” and then worked out an intricate system of control behind that facade. “Putting it in my own words,” Rogers wrote,

“... encounter groups lead to more personal independence, fewer hidden feelings, more willingness to innovate, more opposition to

institutional rigidities.”

Just how Rogers is to say an institution is rigid, in the absence of medical criteria, never gets explained. What does come out in the subsequent discussion is a clear profile of his political enemies, who at the time he was working with the IHM nuns were accusing him of “brainwashing.”

“All types of intensive group experience,” he opines, “have come under the most virulent attack from right-wing and reactionary groups. It is, to them, a form of “brainwashing” and “thought control.””

Turning the tables on his critics, Rogers accused them of orchestrating a right-wing takeover of the country, showing that his “therapy” had a political component after all. It

seems that Dr. Rogers framed some hypotheses after all, and that they had a very distinct political tinge to them:

“Currently, the possibility of a takeover by the extreme right seems more likely in this country than a takeover by the extreme left. But the encounter group movement would be led out of existence in either case, because rigid control, not freedom, would be the central element. One cannot imagine an encounter group in present-day Russia or even Czechoslovakia, though there is ample evidence that many individuals in those countries yearn for just the kind of freedom of expression it encourages .... If there is a dictatorial takeover in this country “and it becomes frighteningly clearer than it might happen here “then

the whole trend toward the intensive group experience would be one of the first developments to be crushed and obliterated.” (pp. 159-160).

Rogers then gives some indication that his political categories were formed in the immediate post-World War II by claiming that his right-wing adversaries were examples of the “authoritarian personality,” which Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno had described in a book which had been funded by CIA money right around the same time that Paul Blanshard’s book came out, and could be seen as another indication of the desire among the thinkers who had been funded by foundations to link Catholicism and fascism: James Harmon, in a carefully documented study, concludes that there is ample evidence that the right wing has a large proportion of authoritarian personalities. They tend to believe that man is by nature, basically evil. Surrounded as all of us are by the bigness of impersonal forces which seem beyond our power to control, they look for “the enemy,” so that they can hate him. At different times in history “the enemy” has been the witch, the demon, the Communist (remember Joe McCarthy?), and now sex education, sensitivity training, “nonreligious humanism,” and other

current demons. (Rogers, p. 12).

As a way of countering the suspicions of his critics that sensitivity training was some conspiracy to brainwash the unsuspecting masses, Rogers claims that the movement just grewed like Topsy:

“One factor which makes the rapidity of the spread even more remarkable is its complete and unorganized spontaneity. Contrary to the shrill voices of the right wing (whom I will mention below), this has not been a “conspiracy.” Quite the contrary. No group or organization has been pushing the development of encounter groups.... There has been no financing of such a spread, either from foundations or governments.” (Rogers, p. 10).

Rogers is not being honest here. First of all he knew that, although the IHM nuns contributed something toward funding of the Education Innovation Project, it was being paid for in part by the Merrill foundation and the Mary Reynolds Babcock foundation, which was based on the R.J. Reynolds tobacco fortune. Rogers in addition must have known that he had veteran psychological warriors on his staff because they cited his credentials in the proposals they co-wrote up to obtain funding for an early version of the project. Rogers’ associate in the IHM

Education Innovation Project Jack Gibb wrote on the grant proposal that while attending the University of Chicago in 1949, he had “developed an intensive program of laboratory and field research into the nature and determiners of defense levels in small groups. This research was supported by the Office of Naval Research between 1953 and 1962.”

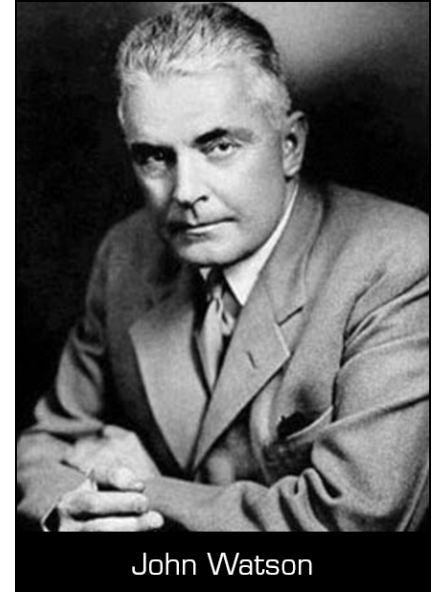
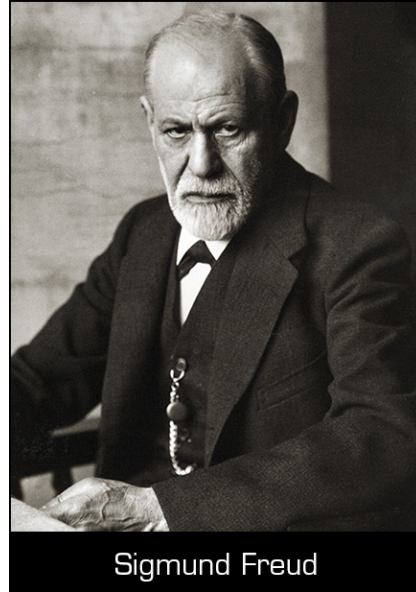
It was the Office of Naval Research, along with the notorious Carnegie Foundation, which also funded the original National Training Laboratories project from 1947 to 1950. Not only had encounter groups, contrary to what Rogers said, been subsidized by both government and foundations, they had been subsidized by them specifically as a form of psychological warfare.

Encounter groups, as Rogers himself indicates by his oblique reference to Kurt Lewin in describing the sources of sensitivity training, were a creation of the CIA’s psychological warfare campaign. Like Wilhelm Reich, Kurt Lewin was a German Jew who left Germany in 1933 when Hitler came to power. Like Rogers, Lewin had been influenced by both Freud and Watson.

Like Rogers, Lewin had been influenced by both Freud and Watson. According to Kleiner, Lewin “believed with the Freudians, that

# Culture Wars

October 1999



subconscious echoes of past traumas drive our deepest feelings, and he also believed with the behaviorists, that people could be programmed to respond predictably to stimuli.” Unlike both Watson and Freud, Lewin felt that “many other forces could affect a person’s ability to decide” (Kleiner, p. 31). Unlike both Freud and Watson, Lewin felt that a number of forces, a whole “force-field,” in fact, composed of “the person’s marriage and family relationships, fears and hopes, neuroses and physical health, work situation and network of friends” controlled the decisions he made. Perhaps because of all the psychic forces which got brought to bear on an individual, Lewin felt that social groups were the most effective means to influence

behavior. In the “40s, he and his assistant Ron Lippitt set out to prove this by experimenting on YMCA groups in Iowa City. Once the war broke out, isolated social scientists like Lewin and Lippitt were gradually drawn into the orbit of research on psychological warfare. “The war,” according to Kleiner, “was generally an immense catalyst for social science in American (and England), because it pulled university researchers from their isolated posts. They worked together on real-world problems such as keeping up military morale, developing psychological warfare techniques, and studying foreign cultures” (Kleiner, p. 31).

Also drawn into the psychological warfare orbit was Lewin’s assistant Ken Benne, who, like Blanshard,

had studied under John Dewey at Columbia. Gradually, a consensus emerged among the psychological warriors that, in Kleiner’s words, “social change had to be managed intelligently “not through force, manipulation, or greedy exploitation.” Encounter groups were simply the most effective instrument science had yet devised to manage social change through the manipulation of peer pressure. How that instrument got used would depend on the social priorities of the class of people who had invented it, and after the successful conclusion of World War II, those people shifted their concerns from fascism to the Catholic Problem, most specifically the demographic threat which Catholic sexual teaching posed to continued WASP



# Culture Wars

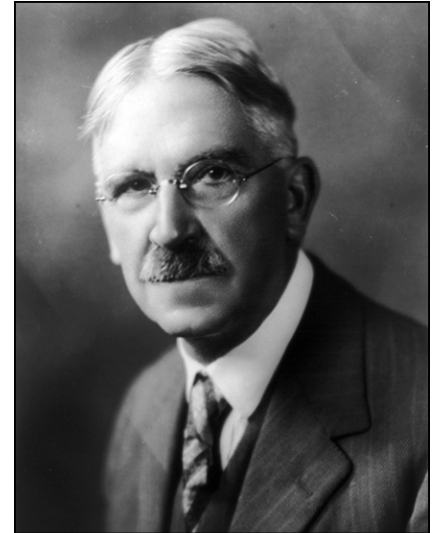
October 1999



Ron Lippitt



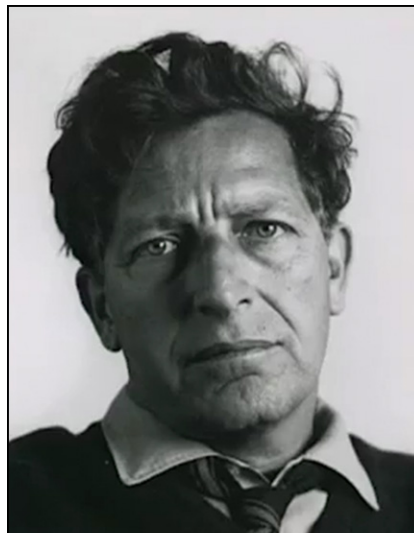
Kenneth Benne



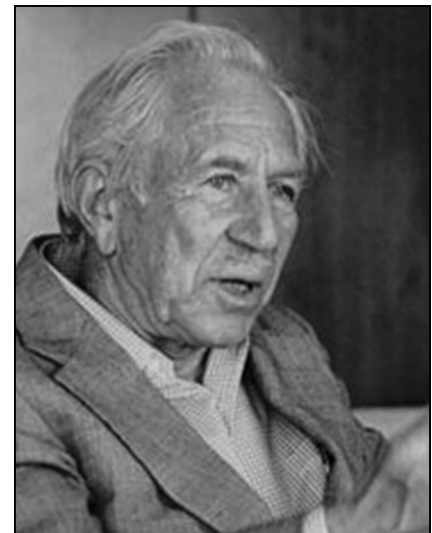
John Dewey



Fritz Perls



Paul Goodman



Alexander Lowen

hegemony in the United States.

The second main source of Encounter Groups was Gestalt Therapy, a creation of Fritz Perls and Paul Goodman, which was just as antithetical to Catholic sexual morality as the psychological warfare of

the WASP elite. Gestalt Therapy was based to a large extent on the psychological ideas of Wilhelm Reich, who saw unfettered sexual activity as the best way to wean people away from their belief in God. Perls was resident guru at Esalen, a few hours'

drive north of Los Angeles, by the time Carl Rogers became involved with the Immaculate Heart nuns. His techniques were well known throughout California, spread by contact through Perls at Esalen and by Reich's student Alexander Lowen,

whose Bioenergetics were based on the Reichian idea of breaking down a person's "body armor" and thereby helping him with the battle against sexual repression and its transcendent counterpart, belief in God.

Michael Weber, in his book *Psychotechniken: Die Neuen Verführer*, sees the rise of encounter group techniques in German seminary training as a Trojan Horse whose purpose was the deliberate destruction of religious vocation and weakening of both Protestant and Catholic Churches in Germany and the subsequent triumph of the secular point of view. Weber also traces the rise of this attack on German religious life to the National Training Laboratories. "In September 1963," according to Weber, "in Schliersee, in Oberbayern, 30 German teachers were subjected to a three-week long workshop run by the National Training Laboratories. The purpose of the T-group was to "influence" their authoritarian teaching style" (Weber. p. 36, my translation).

Weber clearly thinks that the "Immaculate Heart nuns" Education Innovation project was part of the same campaign to cripple religious life. Thirty years later, T-groups had become an essential part of German religious training. Weber sees the heart of encounter as a form of



sexual manipulation. "Sexuality," he writes, plays a crucial role in the group dynamic-based continuing education of priests, a program which involves the sexualization of the person who gets trained" (p. 135, my translation). Sexualization, according to Reich was "the mortal foe of religion." That means that only through the destruction of sexual repression and the alienation of the child from its relationship with his parents can political liberation of the sort that Reich believed in succeed.

This is a fortiori the case for Religious, and Weber sees in the massive spread of encounter groups in seminary training the introduction into Religious orders of a strategy whose purpose is truly

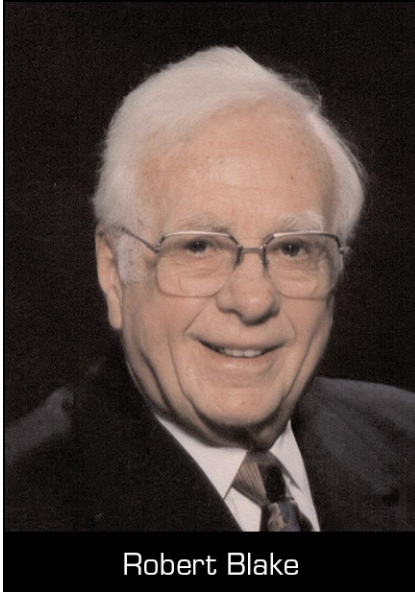
Reichian, namely, sexualization as a prelude to annihilation.

In spite of Rogers' protest to the contrary, Kleiner shows that encounter groups were associated not only with psychological warfare but with brainwashing as well. "As it happened," Kleiner wrote, "...there was an expert on brainwashing within the NTL community, a young psychologist named Edgar Schein, who came to McGregor's department at MIT in the late 1950s, had gone to Inchon at the end of the Korean war to help repatriate American prisoners of war." Schein learned from his research in Korea that the Chinese social control had taken place without drugs, hypnosis, Pavlovian conditioning or even torture; all that was used was peer pressure. Just as in a T-Group, the Communists had put the POWs in a cultural island, cut them off from all contact with outsiders, and surrounded them with friendly Chinese "big brothers" (who had been promised a reward for reforming their Western cellmates.) (pp. 48-9).

Schein promptly applied what he learned in Korea to the development of Encounter Groups for the benefit of the NTL. Schein saw few similarities between POW camps and civilian life in America, until, that is he looked more closely at the most influential management training

# Culture Wars

October 1999



centers in the United States, places like GE's Crotonville and IBM's Sands Point. Since the constraints of corporate life constituted an effective form of the milieu control essential to making encounter techniques work, Schein thought T-groups would work in the corporate world. Schein didn't mention it, but a related conclusion was even more obvious. Convents created even more "milieu control" than big corporations, and so were the ideal setting for brainwashing via Encounter Groups.

Eventually Robert Blake, another NTL alumnus, would put Schein's theory into practice when he held the first corporate sensitivity training session at the Bayway refinery of Standard Oil of New Jersey, then known as Esso. Blake had spent a

year and a half at Tavistock, which was the British psychological warfare operation. Tavistock staged encounters on a much more extensive basis than what was being offered at the National Training Laboratories in Bethel, Maine. Tavistock was also the British psychological warfare unit. Unlike their American counterparts, Tavistock was more interested in control than "peak experiences." Perhaps because of this orientation, Blake, in Kleiner's words, realized that in all T-groups,

"no matter how nondirective the facilitator tried to be, he or she was still subtly dictatorial, even more dictatorial (because of its subtlety) than the harshest CEO, because all of that control was hidden" (Kleiner, p. 53).

The links between Eric Trist of

Tavistock, Douglas McGregor of MIT, Kurt Lewin, the founder of NTL and Robert Blake give some idea of how interlinked the psychological warriors were with each other and with Encounter Groups and how intimately encounter groups were linked with psychological warfare and served interests of the Anglophile intelligence establishment with created it.

On November 28, 1953 Dr. Frank Olson, a U.S. Army scientist, was found dead on the sidewalk outside the Statler Hotel in New York City. A few days later, his death was ruled a suicide. Twenty-two years later, the Rockefeller Commission, set up by President Ford to look into the CIA's illegal domestic intelligence operations, announced that Olson had been the subject of a CIA experiment,



during which he was administered a dose of LSD. The Rockefeller Commission claimed that Olson jumped out of the hotel window in the midst of an LSD-induced psychosis, but Olson's son Eric thinks he was murdered because he was appalled by the human experimentation that was going on and prepared to blow the whistle on it.

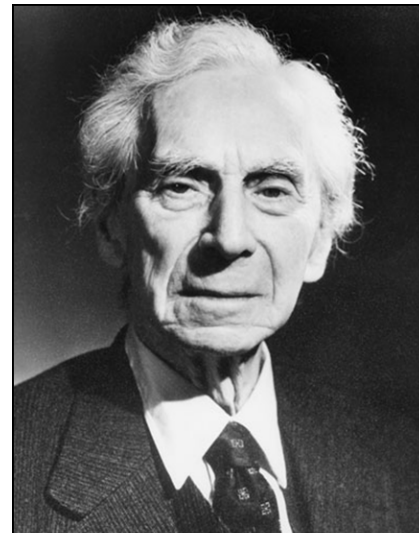
"The use of hallucinogens, hypnosis, electroshock, and other procedures in an attempt to control the way people behave was," according to Eric Olson, "the CIA's equivalent of the Manhattan [atom bomb] Project." (Kevin Dowlings & Philip Knightley, "The Spy Who Came Back from the Grave," Night and Day: The Mail on Sunday Review, August 23, 1998, p. 11). According to the authors, who are British,

"The long-term aim of these experiments with mind-altering drugs is thought by those who have studied the MK-Ultra programme to have been to ensure the dominance of Anglo-American civilization in what eugenicists call the "war of all against all "the key to evolutionary success." Brainwashing would be used not only to defeat the enemy but to ensure the compliance and loyalty of one's own population." (p. 13).

The link between Encounter Groups and the Anglophile



Dr. Frank Olson



Bertrand Russell

intelligence establishment also gives some indication of how the techniques of psychological warfare would get used after the war. Christopher Simpson, in his book *The Science of Coercion*, lists the Office of Naval Research as one of the major conduits of government money into academe for the funding of psychological warfare. (p. 53ff). He goes on to call the people interested in psychological warfare a "reference group" rather than a "conspiracy," but the distinction is largely semantic. At the heart of psychological warfare studies was a group of men, largely alumni of the wartime OSS and Ivy League secret societies like Skull and Bones at Yale who had migrated into the mainstream media and the large foundations. This group shared the

concerns of the anglophile elite about the "Catholic problem," as articulated by Paul Blanshard, and were in a position to do something about it.

As Paul Blanshard had said in his book, *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, Bertrand Russell's greatest concern was that America was going to become a Catholic country and that the Catholics were going to do it "by the numbers," which is to say by demographic increase. John T. McGreevy has shown convincingly that Paul Blanshard, in spite of his reputation elsewhere as an anti-Catholic bigot, enjoyed the all but universal support of this influential class of people at the heart of the WASP ruling class elite. John Dewey praised Blanshard's "exemplary scholarship, good judgment

and tact.” (*Journal of American History*, June 1997, p. 97). In a symposium sponsored by the American Unitarian Association convention on May 25, 1950, McGeorge Bundy, the quintessential establishment figure of the “50s and “60s, praised Blanshard’s book as “a very useful thing.”

The same people who were concerned about the Catholic Problem were also heavily involved in communications theory, which included things like encounter groups, which was in turn a front for psychological warfare. “The evidence thus far shows,” according to Simpson,

“... a very substantial fraction of the funding for academic U.S. research into social psychology and into many aspects of mass communication behavior during the first fifteen years of the cold war was directly controlled or strongly influenced by a small group of men who had enthusiastically supported elite psychological operations as an instrument of foreign and domestic [my emphasis] policy since World War II. They exercised power through a series of interlocking committees and commissions that linked the world of mainstream academe with that of the U.S. military and intelligence communities. Their networks were for the most part closed to outsiders; their records and decision-making



McGeorge Bundy



Nelson Rockefeller

processes were often classified; and in some instances the very existence of the coordinating bodies was a state secret.” (p. 61).

The connection between the people concerned about the “Catholic problem” and the people involved in psychological warfare becomes all but inescapable when we learn that the two most important sources for funding for psychological warfare during the cold war years were the Russell Sage Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation. The Russell Sage Foundation was the publisher of Kurt Back’s book on encounter groups, *Beyond Words*. The head of the social science division of the Rockefeller Foundation was Leland DeVinney, who co-authored the *American Soldier* series with Samuel

Stouffer, a well-known psychological warrior. In addition to using its own money to promote psychological warfare, the Rockefeller Foundation was a conduit for CIA money, channeling at least \$1 million in CIA funds to Hadley Cantril’s Institute for International Social Research.

“Nelson Rockefeller,” according to Simpson, “was himself among the most prominent promoters of psychological operations, serving as Eisenhower’s principal adviser and strategist on the subject during 1954-55” (p. 61).

Once again, the Rockefeller family becomes the crucial nexus in understanding not only the identity of the class (or ethnic group) which was instrumental in the creation of psychological warfare but also why

it was created and against whom it would be used. The Rockefeller family, perhaps more than any other wealthy family in America, assumed the leadership of the WASP class in this country. The Rockefellers' concerns became their concerns and vice versa. The United States, according to C. Wright Mills, "was controlled not by the mass of its citizens as described by democratic theory, but by a wealthy Anglo-Saxon Protestant elite from Ivy League schools" which "heatedly denied that there was such an elite."

When Robert Stephenson, the British Secret agent known as Intrepid, was sent to the United States to set up the British Security Coordination, the intelligence operation that was to bring America into the war on the side of England, he did so knowing that he had the tacit if not overt support of a very influential class of people. Lord Robert Cecil said in 1917 that

"though the American people are very largely foreign, both in origin and in modes of thought, their rulers are almost exclusively Anglo-Saxons, and share our political ideals." (p. 6).

It was this class which supported Planned Parenthood and psychological warfare, and since

this class looked to the Rockefeller family for leadership it was natural that Stephenson should turn to the Rockefellers for support and that they would respond generously. Once the war against fascism was won, the WASP establishment turned its attention to its main demographic and political domestic opponent, namely the Catholic Church. If the WASP establishment which was instrumental in the creation and prosecution of psychological warfare was locked in a knock-down drag out political struggle with the Catholic Church over sexual and demographic issues, then it would stand to reason that they would use the former technique as a way of solving what they perceived as the latter problem.

This meant dealing with Catholic education, which was the Church's most effective antidote to the "socialization" offered by the John Dewey-inspired public schools. That concern was manifested in a series of Supreme Court decisions beginning with Everson decision in the late '40s and culminating the Lemon decision in the early '70s.

Paul Blanshard, it should be remembered, had some very pointed things to say about Catholic nuns and their relationship to Catholic

education in his book *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. In thinking about Catholic education, the most important thing to keep in mind, according to Blanshard, is

"the fact that the economic structure of Catholic schools is threatened with collapse by the growth of modern liberalism among young Catholic women. The Catholic school system is essentially an enterprise of nuns who work without salaries. If the supply of nuns should be cut off, the system would rapidly disintegrate." (p.287).

In order to destroy the Catholic school system and thereby cripple the influence the Catholic Church had in American politics, Blanshard wanted to make sure that young Catholic women were "reared in the free and hearty atmosphere of modern America," which meant sending them to the increasingly sexualized public schools. By promoting "emancipation" among the young Catholic women who would become nuns and staff the Catholic schools, Blanshard and the members of his ethnos hoped that "the hierarchy may ultimately be forced by economic pressure to turn over a large part of its private-school system to democratic public control."



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